

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-10 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SY-05 SCCT-01 /090 W

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R 201050Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5441

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 2395

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR PORG SP MO SS FR

SUBJECT: SAHARA DEVELOPMENTS

REF: A) MADRID 3358 (NOTAL); B) RABAT 2354

1. SUMMARY. MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN SAHARA CONTEXT LAST FEW DAYS HAVE BEEN KING'S ABORTIVE TRIP TO EASTERN MOROCCO AND "DEFECTION" TO MOROCCO OF SAHARAN POLITICAL FIGURE. SPANISH EMBASSY HERE CLAIMS KING HAD HOPED TO MEET BOUMEDIENE DURING EASTERN SWING AND CANCELLED TRIP WHEN BOUMEDIENE INSISTED ON DISCUSSING ENTIRE GAMUT MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN RELATIONS. ALGERIANS HERE DENY THIS CLAIM AND SAY ONLY MINISTERIAL LEVEL VISIT WAS CONTEMPLATED. SPANISH HERE SAY PRO-INDEPENDENCE GUERRILLA MOVEMENT, F POLISARIO, NOW ONLY NIABLE INDEPENDENT FORCE IN SAHARA AND DENY THAT PRO-MOROCCAN LIBERATION AND UNITY FRONT (FLU) SHOT DOWN SPANISH
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HELICOPTER MAY 15 AS CLAIMED. SPANISH SEEM QUITE RELAXED ABOUT SECURITY SITUATION IN SAHARA IN GENERAL AND FATE OF

THEIR TROOPS KIDNAPPED BY F POLISARIO IN PARTICULAR, AND WE BELIEVE F POLISARIO MAY BE LESS ILLEGAL THAN BEFORE. WITH RESPECT TO MOROCCAN-SPANISH DIALOGUE, SPANISH HERE SAY KING'S MEETING WITH THEIR AMBASSADOR CORDIAL BUT NONPRODUCTIVE. WE SHARE EMBASSY MADRID'S VIEW, (REFTEL B) THAT SPANISH LESSINTERESTED IN DIALOGUE AT MOMENT THAN IN ALLOWING MATTERS TO TAKE THEIR COURSE IN ICJ AND UN. END SUMMARY.

2. KING'S ABORTIVE TRIP: MOROCCAN PRESS AGENCY ANNOUNCED MAY 15 THAT KING HASSAN PLANNED BRIEF TOUR THROUGH EASTERN MOROCCAN PROVINCES OF NADOR, TAZA, AND OUJDA MAY 17-19. ONE OF KING'S ACTIVITIES WAS TO BE DEDICATION OF JOINT ALGERIAN-MOROCCAN CEMENT FACTORY IN JBEL N'AINA. ON MAY 17, TRIP WAS CANCELLED AS ABRUPTLY AS IT WAS ANNOUNCED, OSTENSIBLY BECAUSE OF ROYAL "COLD".

3. TRIP HAS AROUSED MUCH SPECULATION. SPANISH HERE, CITING "GOOD MOROCCAN SOURCES", SAY MOROCCANS HAD REQUESTED THAT PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE COME TO CEMENT PLANT DEDICATION AND HOLD DISCUSSION WITH KING. ALGERIANS, SPANISH CLAIM, HAD SAID BOUMEDIENE WOULD COME ONLY IF ENTIRE GAMUT MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN RELATIONS, NOTABLY LONG UNRATIFIED BORDER AGREEMENT, COULD BE DISCUSSED, AND KING, WHO SPANISH SAY WISHES BORDER AGREEMENT AND SAHARA QUESTION TO REMAIN SEPARATE, ANGRILY REFUSED AND CANCELLED JOURNEY.

4. ALGERIANS HERE CONTEND THERE HAD NEVER BEEN ANY QUESTION OF BOUMEDIENE COMING TO MOROCCO. THEY SAY THAT KING'S TRIP HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR TWO WEEKS AND THAT HE ADDED CEMENT PLANT DEDICATION ONLY AT LAST MINUTE. MOROCCANS THEN, ACCORDING TO ALGERIANS HERE, REQUESTED THAT AN APPROPRIATE ALGERIAN OFFICIAL, WHO THEY GAVE IT TO UNDERSTAND SHOULD BE ENERGY AND INDUSTRY MINISTER ABDESSELAM, SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DEDICATION. ABDESSELAM, HOWEVER, WAS IN TUNIS AND THEREFORE NOT AVAILABLE, SO ALGERIANS SAY THEY REQUESTED THAT OTHER UNNAMED MINISTER OR MINISTERS ATTEND. ALGIERS HAD NOT REPLIED TO THIS REQUEST, ALGERIANS SAID, WHEN KING CANCELLED TRIP.

5. PUNS LEADER "RALLIES": GOM SEEMS TO HAVE SCORED
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MAJOR PROPAGANDA VICTORY MAY 18 WHEN IT ANNOUNCED "RALLYING" TO MOROCCO OF APPARENTLY SPANISH-CREATED PARTY FOR SAHARA NATIONAL UNION (PUNS) SECYGEN KHALI HENNA OULD ER RACHID. PRESS HAS DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE SPACE TO HIS DECLARATIONS THAT SAHARA IS PART OF MOROCCO AND HE WAS RECEIVED, WITH TWO COHORTS, BY KING ON MAY 19. HE IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT PUNS WAS GIVEN ITS GO AHEAD BY SPANISH BECAUSE OF ITS AVOWEDLY PEACEFUL AIMS BUT THAT THIS ATTITUDE COULD CHANGE WITH TIME. OULD ER RACHID ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID THAT F POLISARIO (PRO-INDEPENDENCE, AND ALLEGEDLY ALGERIAN BACKED GUERRILLA ORGANIZATION) WAS CREATED IN

1971 UNDER LEADERSHIP OF RENEGADE MOROCCAN, EL OUALI, AND THAT PARTY IS FINANCED BY "A NORTH AFRICAN COUNTRY". F POLISARIO ALLY OF SPANISH COLONIALISM, HE SAID, IN THE SENSE THAT SPANISH ENCOURAGE DEMONSTRATIONS OF SUPPORT FOR THE PARTY (MADRID 3358) TO CREATE FALSE IMPRESSION OF FREEDOM IN SAHARA. HOWEVER, HE ADDED, "88 PER CENT" OF THOSE WHO PUBLICLY CHEERED F POLISARIO IN FRONT OF UN MISSION DON'T KNOW WHY.

6. DEFECTION, ACCORDING TO SPANISH, SPELLS END OF PUNS AND LEAVES F POLISARIO AS ONLY NOTABLY INDIGENOUS PRO-INDEPENDENCE GROUP. FREEDOM WITH WHICH F POLISARIO HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO OPERATE DURING UN COMMISSION'S VISIT TO SAHARA SUGGESTS THAT IT IS LESS ILLEGAL THAN IT WAS LAST SUMMER WHEN IT SABOTAGED BOU CRAA PHOSPHATE CONVEYER BELT.

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R 201050Z MAY 75

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5442

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RABAT 2395

7. SECURITY SITUATION: IT APPEARS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT SPANISH TROOPS KIDNAPPED MAY 10-11 WERE TAKEN BY F POLISARIO AND THAT THEY ARE BEING HELD SOMEWHERE IN ALGERIA. AS WILL BE

REPORTED SEPARATELY, MOROCCAN-LED LIBERATION AND UNITY FRONT (FLU), GAINING STRENGTH BUT SPANISH HERE DENY THAT, AS IT CLAIMED, IT SHOT DOWN SPANISH HELICOPTER IN SAHARA MAY 15. FROM OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH SPANISH HERE, WE HAVE IMPRESSION THEY ARE FOR MOMENT QUITE RELAXED ABOUT SECURITY SITUATION IN COLONY IN GENERAL AND ABOUT FATE OF KIDNAPPED SOLDIERS IN PARTICULAR.

8. MOROCCAN-SPANISH DIALOGUE: CONTRARY TO MOROCCAN FONMINISTRY OFFICIAL'S COMMENT (RABAT 2354), SPANISH HERE SAY DISCUSSION BETWEEN KING AND SPANISH AMBASSADOR MAY 13 WAS CORDIAL BUT NON-PRODUCTIVE. CONTENTION OF SPANISH HERE REMAINS THAT, NOW THAT KING HAS INTRODUCED DYNAMISM INTO SAHARA SITUATION, MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE VERY DIFFICULT.

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9. ICJ PROCEEDINGS: "RALLYING" OF PUNS SECYGEN PUSHED ICJ PROCEEDINGS OUT OF PRESS MAY 19. LAST PRESENTATION BY MOROCCAN UN PERMREP SLAOUI THERE DEVOTED TO ANSWERING PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS POSED BY TWO JUDGES. NO INDICATION WHEN COURT WILL DECIDE ON MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN REQUEST THAT TWO AD HOC JUXKS BE ALLOWED TO JOINT IT FOR PROCEEDINGS.

10. COMMENT: WHILE MOROCCANS BECOMING INCREASINGLY BELLIGERENT IN PUBLIC POSTURE AND SPANISH APPARENTLY AS SET AS EVER ON GOING ICJ-UN ROUTE IN SAHARA, WE DO NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY THAT MEANINGFUL CONTACTS BETWEEN RABAT AND MADRID MAY BE TAKING PLACE. MADRID'S 3382 PROVIDES FOOD FOR THOUGHT IN THIS CONNECTION. WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO GET BETTER READING ON THIS POINT IN NEXT SEVERAL DAYS.

11. FOR THE HAGUE: IT IS DIFFICULT TO JUDGE FROM HERE RELATIVE STRENGTH OF MOROCCAN AND SPANISH BRIEFS WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED TO ICJ. SPANISH TELL US PRIVATELY THAT MOROCCAN CASE VERY WEAK, AND MOROCCANS SAY IN PRESS THAT SPAIN HAS ALREADY TIPPED A VERY POOR HAND BEFORE COURT. ANY INDICATIONS WHICH SURFACE ON CASES EACH SIDE WILL PRESENT WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO US.
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